

Related Applications

This application claims priority to and the benefit of U.S.S.N. 60/169,457, filed December 7, 1999, the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

To the Claims

Please amend claims 1 and 3.

Please delete claim 2 without prejudice and add new claim 4. A marked-up version of the claims is attached at the end of this paper.

1. (Amended) A method for screening for cancer or adenoma in a patient, the method comprising the steps of:
 - determining an amount of nucleic acid greater than about 200 bp in length present in a patient sample comprising shed cells and cellular debris; and
 - identifying said patient as having cancer or adenoma if said amount is greater than an amount of nucleic acid expected to be present in a sample obtained from a patient who does not have cancer or adenoma.
3. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said cancer or adenoma is selected from the group consisting of colon cancer, lung cancer, esophageal cancer, stomach cancer, pancreatic cancer, cancer of the bile duct, and cancer of the duodenum.
4. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid is at least 1.3 Kb in length.

Basis for the Amendments

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1, 3 and 4 are pending. Claims 1 and 3 are amended without any intention of disclaiming equivalents thereof. New claim 4 is added, and claim 2 is cancelled without prejudice and without any intention of abandoning the subject matter thereof. Support for the claim amendments and new claim 4 is found in the specification, for example, on page 3, lines 26-29; on page 4, lines 1-3; on page 7, lines 14-20; on page 12, lines 22-25; on page 20, lines 17-18; on page 21, lines 4-7; page 23, lines